

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** An article conveying apparatus for conveying and transferring articles between a plurality of article storage sections for storing the articles therein and a predetermined entry-and-exit port, the apparatus comprising:

 a running truck body that runs along a track;

 a platform provided with a transfer device that transfers the articles;

 a pair of raising and lowering poles connected to said running truck body and extending vertically therefrom to guide and support said platform such that said platform is able to freely rise and lower;

 a pair of raising and lowering cables, wherein one of said pair of cables is connected to a front side end of an upper part of said platform and the other of said pair of cables is connected to a rear side end of an upper part of said platform to suspend and support said platform;

 a tension setting device that is arranged on the underside of said platform and sets a tension of said pair of raising and lowering cables; and

 a driving winding wheel for feeding and winding said pair of raising and lowering cables, and raising and lowering said platform;

 wherein said pair of raising and lowering cables are guided from the front side end and the rear side end of the upper part of said platform to a vicinity of a central portion of said running truck body between the front side end and the rear side end thereof via said driving winding wheel, and further guided together vertically from the vicinity of the central portion of the running truck body between the front side end and the rear end side thereof to a vicinity of a central lower portion of said platform between the front side end and the rear side end thereof, the other end of each of said raising and lowering cables being connected to said tension setting

device in a vicinity of said central lower portion of said platform between the front side end and the rear side end thereof to said tension setting device.

2. **(CANCELED)**

3. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The article conveying apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said tension setting device comprises:

a spring for setting the tension of each of said raising and lowering cables; and

an error detecting unit provided on said platform to detect an error in said raising and lowering cables on the basis of elongation of said spring.

4. **(PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)** The article conveying apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said tension setting device comprises:

a spring;

a moving member having one end connected to the other end of said raising and lowering rope and the other end connected to one end of said spring;

a setting jig connected to the other end of said spring to set the tension of said raising and lowering cable; and

a detector for detecting, according to the moved distance of said moving member, that an error has occurred in elongation of said raising and lowering cable and that said raising and lowering cable has been cut.

5. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** The article conveying apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said driving winding wheel is arranged at each of opposite ends a portion of said running truck body at the front or rear side end which is a side face in a longitudinal direction.

6. **(CURRENTLY AMENDED)** The article conveying apparatus according to claim 5, comprising:

a first guide wheel provided at a top portion of one of the raising and lowering poles to guide one of said pair of raising and lowering cables in a horizontal direction from one end of an upper part of said platform;

a pair of second guide wheels provided at a top portion of the other raising and lowering pole to guide downward one of the raising and lowering cables guided from said first guide wheel and to guide the other of the cables downward from the other end of the upper part of said platform;

a pair of third guide wheels provided at a bottom portion of said other raising and lowering pole to guide the pair of raising and lowering cables guided from said second guide wheel to said driving winding wheel; and

a pair of fourth guide wheels provided in said central portion of said running truck body between the front side end and the rear side end thereof to guide said pair of raising and lowering cables guided from said driving winding wheel to said vicinity of said central lower portion of said platform between the front side end and the rear side end thereof.